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ABSTRACT

This report explains the need for viable and effective partnerships between K-12 schools and institutions of higher education involving service and service-learning, and discusses the State of Washington's experience in this area. It is stated that both rural and urban schools have found service and service-learning to be effective methods of teaching content literacy as well as civic responsibility. There is a natural connection between K-12 and higher education in the area of service and service-learning with many colleges and universities in the state offering course credit through Cooperative Education Internships and courses that are designated as service-learning. Benefits of service and service-learning for the student, the K-12 school, college/university students, and the community are briefly listed. Contains a short resource list of four local, regional, and national organizations in the area of service and service-learning. (GLR)

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WASHINGTON STATE

Campus Compact

OUR OTHER YOUTH

Terry Pickeral

February 19, 1993

"Partnerships with Higher Education: Campus Compact"

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WASHINGTON STATE

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OUR OTHER YOUTH

Terry Pickeral February 19, 1993

Programs and Practices

"Partnerships with Higher Education: Campus Compact"

A discussion on the viable and effective partnerships between K-12 and institutions of higher education involving service and service-learning. Specific strategies for mutually beneficial programs involving college students in motivating and educating today's youth.

Youth need cohesive school communities that generate a strong sense of affiliation. In addition, environments that provide opportunities for students to choose programs and projects motivate better than "no choice." Other factors that tend to orient students to success in academics and life lead many to consider community service and service-learning as viable educational strategies.

Youth service means young people engaged in service programs that are improving living conditions in their communities. Youth protect natural resources, care for the elderly, tutor youngsters, work in homeless shelters, and reclaim their communities. Youth service answers to some of society's critical needs: the need that all young people have for practical experience, responsibility, self-esteem, discipline, a sense of belonging and an understanding of democratic values in action; and the need communities have for a range of valuable public and human services. Youth service program operators across the nation report that youth service helps build personal character, creates a sense of shared community, and shapes our national destiny by bringing youth of all racial, class and cultural backgrounds to work together in quality service programs.

Community service is education and can serve as a means of learning life skills as well as serving as a bridge to learning academic coursework Youth service programs are most effective when they are organized through collaborative relationships among a broad base of community organizations, agencies, higher education institutions and business and the schools.

The threads of service are woven throughout the fabric of Washington's schools. The strands belong to a variety of vocational programs, student clubs, and different content areas or disciplines. School reformers and innovators support service as a vital part of one's education. For example:

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- The Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI) has provided funding through a variety of resources promoting service;

- Private schools have made service an integral part of their experience;

- Service-learning, especially in Social Studies, has become a component of the curriculum;

- Alternative schools tend to utilize service as a method of learning;

- Many 21st Century Schools incorporate service into their programs;

- Many school districts are assessing the development of a service requirement for graduation; and

- Many more examples of the application of service as a method of learning are available.

Rural schools as well as urban sites have found service and service-learning to be effective methods of teaching content literacy as well as civic responsibility. The national and state agendas for the future indicate a greater dependence on student service participation; not only within the K-12 system but throughout youth service agencies.

No where is the resurgent interest in community service more visible than in higher education. Since 1985 Campus Compact has developed to an organization of over 350 institutions; Campus Outreach Opportunity League (COOL) began with a small band of college graduates and now has chapters in over 600 colleges; and Washington's Higher Education Coordinating Board has encouraged and funded service projects for several years.

There is a natural connection between K-12 and higher education. In fact, there are logical connections anywhere youth gather for college students to perform service. One of the salient elements encouraged on campuses is service-learning; that is, learning from charitable acts, integrating them into the curriculum and addressing issues of social injustice. There are many colleges and universities in Washington offering credit for service learning through Cooperative Education, Internships and courses designated as service-learning.

OSPI and institutions of higher education believe "partnerships" offer successful strategies for today's youth. Many times these partnerships involve business, corporations, city and regional governments, Job Corps and Service Corps organizations.

Service for youth provides meaningful learning opportunities while creating solutions to community problems. Briefly other benefits are outlined.

Benefits to students
- positive perception of ability
- authenticates classroom learning
- intergeneration opportunities
- awareness of community's needs
- promotes awareness of cultural and social diversity
- build self-concept
- clarifies values
- fosters a service ethic
- interaction with a non-parent and teacher forming bond
- orientation to life beyond school
- career orientation
- develops creativity in solving problems
- greater retention

Benefits to K-12 school
- opportunity to demonstrate positive aspects of school
- availability of assistance
- creative use of materials
- new set of eyes
- shared responsibility
- less fragmentation
- engages students
- encourages use of higher order thinking skills
- reinforces basic skills
- in-class assistance
- access to supplemental materials

Benefits to college/university students
- opportunity to make a difference
- career orientation
- opportunity to connect classroom learning to real world
- demonstration of benefits of partnerships
- greater understanding of complexities of world
- acquire/enhance skills
- build service ethic

Benefits to community
- strengthens bonds with the community
- encourages careers in public service
- helps communities reclaim youth
- enhances the social service delivery system
- demonstrates the potential of young people

These benefits are general in nature, each project or program develops objectives specific to the students and community needs.

Resources

There are many local, regional and national resources available to assist in program development, implementation and assessment. The following is a short list.

StarServe

1-800-888-8232
A national non-profit organization providing materials, resources and on going assistance free to teachers and administrators to make community service part of a class or school-wide activity.

Cities in Schools: Turning Kids Around

1-703-519-8999
Training in dropout prevention program development and operation.

Project Service Leadership

1-206-7576-5070
Kate McPherson and Project Service Leadership provides technical assistance to schools, businesses, community organizations and parents interested in encouraging youth involvement in community service and service-learning. PSL serves as a resource center for national service-learning initiatives and the Generator School Project.

Washington State Campus Compact

1-206-650-7312
Coalition of 27 higher education institutions dedicated to encouraging students, faculty and staff to participate in service and service-learning activities. Affiliated with the national Campus Compact (over 300 members), the state organization serves as a clearinghouse of information, provides technical assistance to schools, and develops effective partnerships with other agencies, schools and communities.

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Terry Pickeral, Director of the Washington State Campus Compact has developed and implemented programs for at-risk youth since 1989. He has directed the SMART (Summer Motivation Academic Residential Training) Program, providing academic, recreational, vocational, residential and service opportunities for 14 and 15 year olds on Western Washington University's campus. He has developed several campus-based mentoring/tutoring programs linking college students and K-12 youth. He assists organizations in program development, implementation, training and assessment. He is a member of the Washington Council on Volunteerism and Citizen Service.